

# Dabuda, Dat-So-La-Lee, Louisa Keyser 1829-1925



Louisa Keyser, also known as Dat-So-La-Lee or Dabuda, is the most famous Washoe Indian basket weaver. She was born in the Woodfords area (25 miles south of Carson City) before European Americans settled Nevada. At that time, Washoe women would weave baskets to cook and store food, winnow seeds and carry infants. In 1895, Dat-So-La-Lee moved to Carson City offering small baskets for sale to the owner of an emporium there. This owner, Abe Cohn, became Dat-So-La-Lee's main benefactor and promoter, building a small vernacular board-and-batten cottage for her around 1914. This photo was taken in 1910 as part of Cohn's promotional material.

From 1914 until her death in 1925, Abe and Amy Cohn supported her so that she could concentrate on making her superb baskets to sell to tourists and collectors, becoming internationally known. Even during her lifetime, Dat-So-La-Lee's baskets sold for thousands of dollars, a large sum for the early 20th century. Dat-So-La-Lee was the undisputed master of a craft that was at the same time dying in her culture. She was an inspiration to young women and girls who wanted to learn the ancient art of basket-weaving. Her baskets can be found at the Smithsonian, the Nevada State Museum in Carson City, and the Nevada Historical Society in Reno.

For more information on Dat-So-La-Lee and other important Nevada women visit:  
<http://www.unr.edu/nwhp/index.htm>

